

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, IZ, SY

SUBJECT: PRESS COMMENT ON US-SYRIAN RELATIONS

1. JUNE 11 EDITIONS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY BAGHDAD OBSERVER CONTAINED BRIEF ARTICLE REPORTING STATE DEPT ANNOUNCEMENT THAT SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ABDEL HALIM KHADDAM WILL VISIT WASHINGTON JUNE 20 TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY KISSINGER. SAME EDITION CARRIED HALF-PAGE REVEIW OF SYRIAN-US RELATIONS UNDER TITLE QUOTE U.S.-SYRIAN RELATIONS: DAMASCUS PAYS IN PEACE UNQUOTE. FOLLOWING EXCERPTS FROM LATTER ARTICLE.

2. QUOTE: FOLLOWING THE OCTOBER WAR, 1973, AS THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT ADOPTED THE OPEN COMPROMISE POLICY LINE ACCORDING TO WHICH IT ACCEPTED THE SO-CALLED "SETTLEMENT" AT THE INITIATIVE OF U.S. IMPERIALISM, RELATIONS BETWEEN DAMASCUS AND WASHINGTON GREW "FRIENDLIER", THEN RESUMED AT THE DIPLOMATIC LEVEL FOLLOWING FORMER PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON'S VISIT TO DAMASCUS ON JUNE 15 AND 16, 1974...THE SYRIAN MINISTER OF INFORMATION ISSUED AN ORDER BANNING ANY CRITICISM OR ATTACK AGAINST THE U.S. POLICY OF AGRESSION...AGAINST THESE RELATIONS, THE ARAB MASSES OF SYRIA HAVE IN NO WAY BEEN INDIFFERENT. THEY PARTICALLY EXPRESSED THEIR ATTITUDE THROUGH ASSAULTS ON U.S. CENTRES IN DAMASCUS; AN EXPLOSION WRECKED THE BUILDING OF NATIONAL CASH REGISTER COMPANY NEAR THE U.S. EMBASSY, IN OCTOBER 1974, AND ANOTHER EXPLOSION IN THE

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BUILDING CHOSEN TO HOUSE THE U.S. INFORMATION CENTRE. RELATIONS

AND MEASURES OF THE SYRIAN REGIME ARE FAR FROM BEING IN LINE WITH
THE ASPIRATIONS OF OUR ARAB MASSES FOR LIBERATION AND INDEPENDENCE.
UNQUOTE

2. COMMENT: MOST OF THE TEXT OF ARTICLE FOCUSED ON GROWING
U.S. - SYRIAN ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS, INCLUDING AID AGREEMENTS,
TRADE MISSIONS AND CONTRACTS WITH U.S. FIRMS..E.G. FOR OFFSHORE
OIL EXPLORATION. TONE OF COVERAGE IS RESTRAINED. ARTICLES
APPEARED IN SAME ISSUE WHOSE COVER HAS PICTURE OF SMILING
SENATOR FULBRIGHT MAKING CALL DAY BEFORE ON BEAMING PRESIDENT BAKR.
KILLOUGH

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